

## CREATIVE AID OF MOBILE APP TO PROMOTE INTRINSIC MOTIVATION FOR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

DAMMU BETTY BEAULAH

Research Scholar, EFLU, Hyderabad

### Abstract

Motivating engineering students for acquiring English Language Skills for employability plays a vital role. In the absence of intrinsic motivation to focus on English, it has become quite challenging for many students to attain required levels of proficiency. It is a common experience for many members of faculty at Engineering Colleges to find only a few students who have got that burning desire of learning language skills to excel in their career. Though many students have a desire to be proficient in English, their motivation levels often vacillate when it comes to paying serious attention. In this context, the researcher has experimented with a mobile app to study the efficacy of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), for motivating learners by conducting a three-week competition among students belonging to different branches of engineering. This paper presents the results of the competition using the *Quiz your English* app designed and launched by Cambridge English.

Keywords: Mobile App, motivation, language proficiency.

### Introduction:

***"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow"*** – John Dewey. There is widespread application of English language in the field of Engineering. It is being used as a common means of communication all over the world whether it is for acquiring knowledge from books, publishing their research reports, for giving oral presentations, for presenting papers in seminars and conferences. Right from classroom communication to writing an effective statement of purpose, to participate in telephonic interviews and face to face interviews, one needs to have command over intelligible English. Thus speech intelligibility is a significant and deciding factor in attaining success and is a sure passport of power, prestige and prosperity.

In 2010, Career Assessment and Research Solutions firm, Aspiring Minds gave a shocking statement that 82% of Indian engineers were unfit for any job, in National Employability report. Nearly after a decade, there was no much change as the NER-2019 report revealed that 50% of students lose out because of lack of language proficiency.

Owing to the guidelines of AICTE, in all the Indian Engineering colleges, to inculcate these skills,

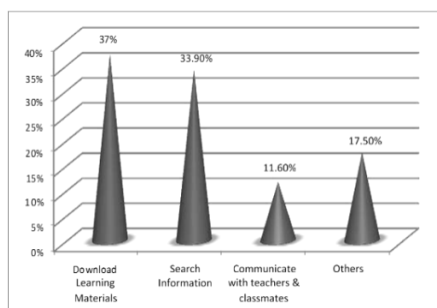
subjects like Soft skills, Business Communication, Presentation skills and Employability skills are being taught. Unfortunately, all these ways are less productive and it is not serving the purpose completely. Moreover, within a short period, they need to finish the syllabus and this time is not enough to master a language.

The boundary between institutionalised and outside learning, the classroom is gradually fading out in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the advent of Technology, especially mobile technologies. Mobile learning is making learning Ubiquitous, Independent of time, place and previous qualifications of the learners. As the mobile phones are getting more sophisticated with many advanced features and cheaper day by day, they are creating new avenues for learning for the underprivileged. The wider penetration of mobile phones into rural areas has led to a drastic change in the way people communicate and share information with one another.

According to Bill Gates, ***"Technology is just a tool, in terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important."*** Teacher being a torch bearer and a bell ringer, should be well versed with technology, to

know the ways to incorporate it as an aid to facilitate teaching and learning.

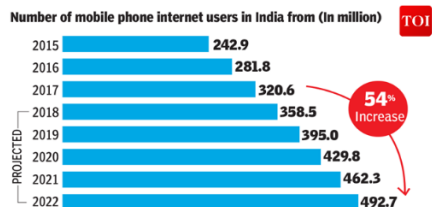
**What is MALL?** Mobile Assisted Language Learning is an extension of e-learning and a branch of ICT in education. The UNESCO policy guidelines on mobile learning clearly states that, far from being a theoretical possibility, it is an on-the-ground reality. Learners can also elicit support from peers and instructors by forming a community of learners through Whatsapp groups. India has become No.1 mobile data consuming country globally, according to the CEO of Niti Aayog. It is evident from the following tables.



**MOBILE INTERNET USERS GROWING AT FAST CLIP**

➤ In 2017, 320.6 million people accessed the internet on their mobile phones

➤ In 2022, this figure is projected to amount to 492.7 million mobile phone internet users, a rise of 54%



**Review of Literature:**

Motivation has been seen as an essential causative factor in all learning activity. Intrinsic Motivation, studied by educational psychologists since 1970's and numerous studies based on ideas relating to "locus of control" and "goal orientation" in Fritz Heider's Attribution theory. Bandura's work on self-efficacy found out to be associated with educational achievement and enjoyment in students. R. C. Gardner defined motivation as involving 4 aspects, "a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes towards the activity in question".

Kukulksa-Hulme and Shield (2008) propose to include the nature of learning within its purview. Hence, any form of formal or informal learning that is facilitated by portable handheld devices and is

accessible anytime, anywhere is considered as mobile learning. Theories of behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, situated learning, collaborative learning, informal and lifelong learning, self-paced learning are among the theories which are believed to be relevant to mobile learning (Keskin and Metcalf, 2011; Naismith, et al., 2004). Enjoyable learning activities motivate learners to get involved in the learning process more and more. Kim et al., (2009) proposed mobile games on smart phones to be effective for learning English as a Second Language in a rural under-resourced setting. Apart from targeting specific skills and aspects of language, some studies have also utilised the mobility of the device to encourage situated and collaborative learning. In a project conducted with adult second language learners, a mobile learning environment was created that supported "meaningful, collaborative production, and sharing of learner-generated authentic content." (Gjedde and Bo- Kristensen, 2012, p. 185).

**Research Questions:**

1. Are rural engineering students ready to utilize the opportunity of learning from their mobile phones?
2. Can they use their smartphones for learning English outside the classroom?
3. What is the effect of mobile learning experiences of the learners and how does it affect their confidence level?

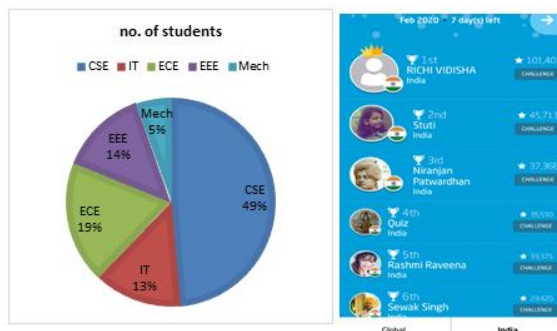
**Methodology:**

The study has adopted a mixed method approach to ascertain the participation of students from an engineering college located in a rural area (Dundigal, Hyderabad), where the majority of students come from nearby villages. To create more interest and to involve the learners further, a quasi-experimental study was undertaken in the form of a competition among III-year engineering students of same institution. The duration of the competition is for 3 weeks and students were asked to use the app Quiz your English released by Cambridge English in the month of February, 2020. The competition was open to all the students of III-year (n=520). Before the app is introduced to students, the researcher has made

a thorough study of the app and all its features. It contains some free sections and some paid ones. Students were asked to use the free sections. *I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I Understand*, this quotation from Confucius is so often cited that it has become clichéd but speaks volumes about the importance of keeping learners engaged in tasks that are interesting and relevant. To create a healthy competitive environment, they were directed to select “Technology” section. This is an unpaid from Google Play Store. This study is based on Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model. A demonstration session was held before all the registered students to get them familiar with the app and doubts were clarified.

**Results and Analysis:**

378 students out of 520 have been registered for the event and that is 72.69% and out of the registered students of 378 only 211 students, nearly 56% registered students participated in the competition. There were 156 students who continued till the end and out of them only 74 student stood in the global top 100 participants in the quiz. The below pi chart shows, 36 positions out of 74 in the top hundred were secured by the department of Computer Science Engineering followed by Information and Technology, Electronics and Communication Engineering, and students from other branches. It is commendable that all the top 20 positions globally were secured by the students who participated in the competition.



**Conclusion**

It is evident from the experimental study that English faculty need to find alternative ways to improve English Language Skills for rural engineering student beyond the classroom. Given the opportunity and motivated in the right direction, they have displayed

their readiness to utilize the latest mobile technologies for enhancing their language skills. The effect of participating in the Quiz Your English contest has been positive and it has raised the confidence levels. Many of the students who participated in the quiz felt that there should be more such contests to improve their Language Proficiency.

**References:**

Bandura, A. (1991). Self-Efficacy. In *Encyclopaedia of human behaviour, Vol. 4*. V. S. Ramachandran (Ed.): 71-81. New York: Academic Press.

Gardner, R. C. (1998). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The role of Attitudes and Motivation*. London: Edward Arnold

Keskin, O. N., & Metcalf, D. (2011). The current perspectives, theories and practices of mobile learning. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology, 10*(2), 202-208.

Kam, M., Kumar, A., Jain, S., Mathur, A., & Canny, J. (2009). Improving literacy in rural India: Cell phone games in an after-school program. *International conference on Information and Communication Technologies and development*. (ICTD), 2009

Kukulka-Hulme, A. & Shield, L. (2008). An overview of mobile assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction. *ReCALL, 20*, pp 271-289 doi:10.1017/S0958344008000335

Naismith, L., Lonsdale, P., Vavoula, G. & Sharples, M. (2004) Literature Review in Mobile Technologies and Learning. *FutureLab Report No. 11*. Retrieved from [http://www.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/lit\\_reviews/Mobile\\_Review.pdf](http://www.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/lit_reviews/Mobile_Review.pdf).